



BILK NINE AND TEN  
July 1986

BILK is Ulrich Magin's newsletter about water monsters and marine for-teana. Usually bi-monthly, but BILK 9&10, and 11&12 will be double-numbers, nr13 comes next March.



so you live in the bottom of the sea  
and you kill all that comes near you  
but you are very lonely  
because all the other fish fear you  
Peter Hammill: Killer (1970)

#### BEHEMOTH:

● Lake Hanas, China: An article in 'China im Aufbau', April 1986, pp. 43 and 44, by Wen Jiao, gives further infos about "China's Loch Ness Monster". Lake Hanas, 500 km north of Ürümqi, in the province of Xinjiang, is about 25 km long and up to 170 m deep. Locals belief it is the home of a sheep devouring monster. When good tempered, these monsters chase each other in the centre of the lake, creating wakes as high as 10 m! About the turn of the century they ate a whole herd of horses. In 1980 they destroyed a net used by technicians of Xinjiang's Bureau for Water-Economy. Then, in July 1985, 24 students and professor Xiang Lihao of the University of Xinjiang were on an observation tower at the shore when they spotted several giant red fish. In the morning of the following day Lihao returned with binoculars and a camera. He again saw the fish and managed to take pictures, which show some 60 of the monsters, holding their heads above the surface. A later analyses of the pix revealed that the fish were about 10m/ 33 ft long! (and not 2m, as stated in Western Press reports last year) On July 27, the students put bait and a giant net into the lake but did not catch anything for two days. Then, on the 29th, a monster was seen throwing up a big wave, but couldn't be caught, as it ignored both bait and net. This was the end of the expedition, but it is planned to return this year to solve the problem. It seems that last years press accounts in our papers gave a wrong idea of China's monster: it is 10m long, and still unidentified, despite the claim that it is only a red salmon.

(Note: Fortean Times 46, as usual excellent, has on page 28 a note on the Lake Hanas monster. There it is identified as a type of salmon usually only 6.6 ft long - a little bit doubtful if we see the difference in size. 10m would make the Lake Hanas salmon the biggest freshwater-fish of the world!)

● Lake Tianchi, China: 'China im Aufbau', April 1986, pp.24-25, also has an article by Tan Manni about the Jilin region at the border to Korea. There Lake Tianchi is situated, also called Heaven's Lake, in which a monster surfaced in 1980 (this was reported in Oktober of that year in many newspapers). Manni reports that in the meantime there have been additional sightings and even photos, and quotes a general description: head like a serpent, neck like a goose, with a white spot under the chin, and a back as long as two trucks. Manni says that although this sounds like a dinosaur, it is more likely an otter or simply hallucinations.

● Venezuela: 'GEO', August 1984, had a first report about the rock towers in Venezuela. It reports on an expedition which had found many new plants and animals (among them a bearded fish!) on a tower called

'Neblina', and mentions vaguely that these towers are reportedly the home of monsters. The expedition had been carried out by a mixed team from the USA and Venezuela.

Michel Raynal, in a letter, suggested Laime might have seen a giant otter of South America. In fact, this was also suggested by GEO. Yet it is only likely if you compare the outlines of Laime's monster with those of an otter. Laime's description talks of an animal with scaly flippers, a feature not present in an otter. A dino is very unlikely, but what about a creature similar to the Komodo-dragon?

● Loch Ness: The Scotsman, June 4, 1986, p.6c-g, has an article headlined "Inventors hope Nessie proves fair game". Adrian Shine and Tony Harmsworth (known to all aficionados of Nessie) have developed a game - sounds like monopoly to me - with which, as Shine puts it, "players can learn about the geography of the Great Glen rift valley, life cycles of fish, deep and surface invertebrates and plankton, and a lot about photography, sonar and video techniques. In fact they can encounter many of the true-to-life problems during the 50-year search for Nessie, either financial, logistical or even psychological." No comment.

#### ISIS:

● Black Sea mermaid: I suggested in the last issue of BILK that this mummy may be some old religious object. I can now confirm that such fake-mummies were a part of several ancient cults. W.H. Roscher: Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie, vol. v, Georg Olms, Hildesheim 1965, colm.1161, quotes Demostratos who reports that a jenny haniver made of a fish was exhibited in the Temple of Dionysos in Tanagra. Pliny (Nat.His.32,c.11,149,151) mentions a triton exhibited in another temple, and Pausanias saw one in Rome. Therefore, perhaps a similar jenny haniver was also shown in ancient Sochi (if the story is not a hoax...)

#### LEVIATHAN:

● Ionian Sea: In June 1982, Mr Peratinos saw a seaserpent between Calabria, Italy, and Zante, Greece, on 38°N. He was on deck of a sailing ship when he saw a 5 - 6 metres (17 - 20 ft) long animal undulating laterally. My source is a letter from Jean-Jacques Barloy, dated April 15, 1986. (credit: J.-J. Barloy)

● Naples, Italy: In May 1985, a 'leatherback turtle' was caught off Naples, Italy. It measured three metres (10 ft) from the nose to the tip of the tail - and this is at least 50 cm (2 ft) too long to be a leatherback turtle (the maximum length of the Atlantic species is about 2.4m!). Perhaps it was one of Heuvelman's 'Father of the Turtles'. (Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 13.May 1985, p.8f) A similar monster, but much bigger (about 4 m) was observed by a Colombian seaman off Colombia in 1955. More about this genuine seamonster can be found in Gabriel Garcia Marquez's book "The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor", just published in America. (see TIME, 14.4.1986,p.69) Marquez was awarded the Nobel-prize for literature some years ago, and this is a really exciting book.

● Casco Bay, Maine, USA: On June 5, 1958, Ole Mikkelsen saw a marine monster in Casco Bay, Maine. His description of the creature is very vague, but we learn that it appeared like a submarine to him. It had a light brown colour, with a lighter underside. The tail was like a mackerel's. It was over 100 ft long, and held its head well over the water. The head was broader than the long neck it was on. He could not see any ears or eyes, but the animal reacted to the blow of a foghorn. Mikkelsen was accompanied by Mr Haugaard on board of the 'Hirsthals'. Loren Coleman: Casco Bay's Sea Serpent, Portland Monthly, May 1986, pp.46 - 48. (credit: Michel Raynal)

#### CRYPTO-OLDIES:

Some authors, like the Bords or John Keel, claim that alien animals are not natural, but supernatural beings, and quote reports of several strange monsters at the same place as indication for that, for example Morgawr and the owlman in Cornwall, and Nessie and pumas at Loch Ness.

● The first report of the Cornish 'owlman' was mentioned in several books and booklets, but never quoted in full, so that I think I fill a gap in doing so: "Boys attacked by strange birds - Unpleasant Experience near Porthtowan - While proceeding along a road on Sunday (=30.5.) evening, midway between Mount Hawke and Porthtowan, two lads had their attention drawn to something fluttering on top of a mine burrow. The younger boy ascended the burrow to ascertain what it was, and on finding a large bird, apparently dead, proceeded to examine it. The boy was instantly attacked, and ran back to his brother, who just managed to throw his coat over the bird to prevent any injuries being done. The bird, however, escaped from the coat and attacked the elder boy, who defended himself with a stick, and eventually killed the bird, but not before he had received a severe bite on the hand.

The bird measured 6 ft 3 in in length. It had a powerful pointed beak 6 in in length, short legs, full webbed feet striped with green and yellow, and a duck shaped body. The plumage was of cream colour, tinged with brown on the back, and also on the upper wing-coverts, the tips of the wing being black. The bird had a severe wound under the right wing, which, no doubt, had caused it much pain, and must have infuriated it. The creature was in a very poor condition, and, owing to rapid decay, was soon buried. Many villagers saw the bird, but none were able to name it." (Cornish Echo, 4. June 1926, p.6f.)

Whatever this bird was - and I think an ornithologist might be able to identify it - it surely was not a mothman-like monster, or cross between a human and an owl. It's a pity that one often relies on sources which mis-represent an incident - for example, all books mentioning this attack ascribe it to a giant bird, thus implying it was somewhat related to owlman. (P.S. The word "birds" is also in the original headline, though the text only talks about one bird).

● The Scottish puma was, as I see it, first mentioned by Bede. Keith Thomas, in his: Man and the Natural World, Allen Lane, London 1983, (forgot to note page, sorry!) writes: "In England the wolves receded into legend, along with the 'very many' lions which the Elisabethan William Harrison believed had once stalked Scotland ( and against which Bede had warned English shepherds to beware)." It seems that this enigmatic beast was known even in the Middle Ages.

#### STRANGE FISH:

● Paris, France: "Deadly catch: Paris (AFP) - M Christian Arnt, an amateur fisherman, nearly lost a finger trying to identify a 6 in fish with sharp teeth which he had caught in a Paris canal. Experts later identified it as a man-eating Amazonian piranha." (The Times, 7.8.1985)

● Sausalito, California, USA: "The nights of the houseboat community in Sausalito, California, have been disturbed by a mysterious 40-deci-bel hum that has been likened to the drone of a B-29 bomber. Experts have had to be sent for, and they report: 'It's not a military secret. It's not the sanitation department. IT's not an extraterrestrial, a nuclear device, or a Russian submarine'. This narrows it down, apparently, to lots of male toadfish singing for mates. The only solution: Ear-plugs." (Daily Mail, 16.8.1985, p.10f) More infos about the "hum" can be found in Fortean Times 45, p.17, and Pursuit, Fall 1985, p.140, and -if I remember right- in one of the last issues of Science Frontiers.

#### UFOS AND THE SEA & USOS:

● Cook Islands: The unidentified submarine seen off the Cook Islands in the South Pacific was, according to New Zealand's Prime Minister Lange, only a whale. "I have strong reasons to suspect that it was a whale which had some problems with digestion", he declared according to the Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 17. April 1986, p.48e, after he had talks with the Prime Minister of the Cook- Islands, Sir Tom Davis. I think it was also in the Times of the same day. (There is still the possibility that a real-life sub had been seen, and that Lange had to deny to avoid political problems.)

● Sweden: The Russian subs are back after nearly two years break!



In the last week of May, and the first of June 1986, several registrations of submarine activity were obtained at Norrtälje in Sweden, north of Stockholm, and west of the Aaland Islands. On June 6 and 7 the Swedish navy began their bombardment of the alleged intruder after they made several hydrophone contacts. As usual, they got no results.

On Friday, June 6, around 2 pm, in the Vidingefjärden, and on Saturday, June 7, around 9.30 am, in the Naatfjärden, anti-submarine-bombs were fired, and shipping prohibited in the general area. No commie-sub surfaced, though the area was combed by the navy. A marine spokesman, Admiral Stefenson, declared that there had been indications that a submarine was in the region for 10 - 14 days, and that the new tactic of the Swedish navy was to throw bombs even if they were not 100 % sure if alien crafts were present or not. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 9. June 1986, p.1b-d;2f ;and Süddeutsche Zeitung, 9. June 1986, p.7b)

This is just the most recent case of 'Russian subs' in Skandinavia. Like in most cases before, I'm sure they'll get no results. The experience of the last years shows that a large variety of things has been mistaken for subs: canoes, shipwrecks, whales etc. The "communist submarine" seems to be nothing more than a modern variety of the Skandinavian seaserpent.

#### ● Irish Sea:

On February 23, 1986, at 8.30 pm, Prince Charles was in a plane on his way back from the USA over the Irish Sea when he, as well as four other planes, saw a red glowing UFO. The pilot of Prince Charles' RAF VC-10 said the light from it lit up his cockpit. Heathrow airport had no explanation, but it seems likely that it was a satellite re-entry or a meteor. UFO-'expert' Tim Good, however, has a far better explanation: "It is likely that any creature from outer space that is more advanced than us would be aware of the significance of the Royal flight." Well, if this is the reason why they come, we can also explain the Swedish USOs, which -as is clear now- only come to Stockholm to see our own German Queen Sylvia! (Sources: Abendpost, Frankfurt/M., 3.3.; Sunday Mirror, 2.3., National Enquirer, 18.3.1986; CENAP-Report, May 1986, pp. 14 - 18)

● Others: Several other recent UFO-reports were also associated with the sea: On January 28, 1986, a 6m/20 ft piece of metall falling down from a clear blue sky 85 km off the coast of North Carolina killed the son of Brazilian fisherman John Kipalani. He thinks it was a part of the ill-fated shuttle - which I think is highly unlikely (Sonntag Aktuell, 13.4.1986, p.48). On May 20, 1986, Ufos appeared over São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in Brasil, all coastal towns. (Rheinpfalz, 23.5. & Sonntag Aktuell, 25.5. and 1.6.1986). On June 1st, a saucer was observed over the sea off Florida, and later identified as Russian missile (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 3.6.1986). On April 30, 1984, a mock sun was spotted by the ship 'Stability' over the Mediterranean, and on May 6, 1985, strange lights, perhaps belonging to a USO (and with a certain similarity to the famous Fort Salisbury seaserpent) were observed by a ship on the Equatorial Eastern Atlantic (both in Science Frontiers 44)

#### MISSING SHIPPING:

● A German yacht disappeared on its way from West-France to the Pacific Ocean. The yacht with 4 Germans aboard, is missing since February 6. Only one of the crew had any sailing experience. They have not responded to any search calls. (Rheinpfalz, 18.4.1986)

● The German press reported the mysterious sinking of the ship 'Snekkar Arctic' 630 nautical miles west of Lewis, Scotland, but gives no more details. (Rheinpfalz, 22.2.1986)

● Mr M Lewis, 91 The Triangle, Compton Street, Goswell Road, London EC 1V OAR, is looking for infos about many headed monsters. Who can help? Next BILK comes in September, and then in March 87, due to my stay in Dublin, Ireland. U.Magin/Stuhlbruderhofstr.4/6704 Mutterstadt